

14 January 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing Senator Dick Clark (D.-Iowa) on the
Soviet Strategic Posture

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1. [redacted] OSR; [redacted] OLC; and I met with Senator Clark in his office on the afternoon of 11 January at his request to discuss our views on the Soviet posture. At our request, no staff members were present.
2. Affable as always, Senator Clark began by stating that he really was quite concerned by the welter of press leaks surrounding NIE 11-3/8-76 and asked that we give him some feeling of the actual situation. [redacted] began by ticking-off each of the major Soviet weapons programs now under way.
3. The Senator periodically interrupted with questions--good ones--such as the ability of the Soviet economic base to continue supporting increased defense expenditures. We responded to that question noting that present Soviet defense expenditures were roughly 12 percent of GNP and that, so long as Soviet GNP kept growing, there was no reason that this rate could not be maintained or even increased slightly provided Soviet leadership was willing to make the sacrifice. The Senator asked about the judgments in 11-3/8 and we gave them as well as the alternative position expressed by other members of the Community. We also did something of a tutorial job in explaining to the Senator how an estimate comes to be.
4. The Senator asked about the B-Team Report and we explained to him the history and philosophy behind it. At this point, the Senator stated that it was his feeling, and one he had expressed many times, that CIA's objectivity was the greatest intelligence asset this government had. While he did not agree with covert action programs and many of the other things done in years gone by, he said, he did feel quite strongly about the Agency's value when it came to producing unbiased intelligence.


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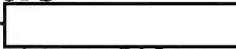
CL BY [redacted]

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5. The Senator was meeting with President-elect Carter the next day and said that he felt the briefing would be very useful in that connection.



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